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British Columbia News

B.C. finalizes proof of vaccination policy to protect workers

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/25643>

As the largest single employer in the Province's public sector, the Government of B.C. is safeguarding its workers, requiring that all direct government employees have the best defence against COVID-19 and variants by being fully vaccinated by Nov. 22, 2021.

Building on existing health and safety measures in provincial government workplaces, the proof of vaccination requirement will provide reassurance to public-service employees and the people they serve.

The policy applies to any employee working for the BC Public Service, regardless of whether the employee works on site or remotely. This also includes employees of any board, commission, agency, or organization to which the Public Service Act applies or whose employees are hired in accordance with the Public Service Act, unless their organization will have a comparable policy in place by Nov. 22.

Complementary to the new proof of vaccination policy, the existing BC Public Service Occupational Safety and Health Policy has been updated to require contractors and others accessing employee-only areas of indoor public-service workplaces to be fully vaccinated by Dec. 13, 2021. This does not apply to members of the public accessing government services.

Providing proof must be done by showing a digital or paper version of the BC Vaccine Card indicating the person has been fully vaccinated. Employees who do not provide proof of vaccination, or refuse to disclose their vaccination status by Nov. 22, 2021, will be considered unvaccinated.

While strong compliance is expected, BC Public Service employees who do not have at least one dose of the vaccine by Nov. 22, where there is not an approved exemption based on a medical condition or other legitimate grounds, will be placed on unpaid leave for three months.

Partially vaccinated employees – those who have received only one dose – may be offered alternative work arrangements and will be required to provide proof of full vaccination within 35 days of having received their first dose. Partially vaccinated employees who are not fully vaccinated within that timeline will be placed on unpaid leave.

Employees who are still unvaccinated after the three-month unpaid leave may be terminated.

The proof of vaccination policy will be in effect until public health concerns regarding COVID-19 are reduced to a level, prescribed by government, to enable workplaces to operate without restrictions or a vaccination requirement.

Implementing the proof of vaccination policy is part of provincewide efforts to continue to boost the B.C.'s vaccination rates. More than 85% of eligible British Columbians have been fully vaccinated.

Learn More:

For information about how to get your COVID-19 vaccination in B.C., visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register> (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register>)

For information about how to get your BC Vaccine Card, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/proof> (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/proof>)

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